

WASHINGTON

Discussion on the Proposed Repeal of the Tenure of Office Act in the Senate.

Passage of the Constitutional Amendment in the House.

Dempsey, the Stationery Contractor, a Recipient of Executive Clemency.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1869.

The Suffrage Amendment.

Mr. Bingham's amendment of the joint resolution proposing a new amendment to the constitution was adopted by the aid of the democrats in the House today. When the amendment was first voted for many republicans were recorded against it, while the democrats, with few exceptions, voted for it. When the vote was taken on the joint resolution as amended the republicans turned in and passed it a two-thirds vote, and the democrats went against it. The chief objection among the republicans to Bingham's proposition is that it does not provide for the disfranchisement of persons who participated in the late rebellion, nor does it provide for a similar punishment for any persons who may hereafter engage in rebellion against the government. On this account it is known as the "amnesty amendment."

The House Amends the Supplementary Currency Bill.

The Senate Finance Committee, at their meeting today, had the House amendments to the Supplementary Currency bill under consideration. As might be expected in a committee composed largely in the interest of the national banks, the House amendments to the bill met with little favor. Senator Catlett, who is the President of the Corn Exchange National Bank, Philadelphia, made a fight upon Coburn's amendment, which is now the fourth section of the bill, and it was stricken out. The Finance Committee will agree to most of the amendments made by the Committee on Banking and Currency to the original Senate bill, but they cannot swallow Coburn's amendment, because it is supposed to be hostile, in some degree, to the national banks.

The Tenure of Office Act.

The Tenure of Office act is once more revived, and is now trembling in the balance in the house of its friends—the Senate of the United States. After a good deal of effort it was put upon the carpet to-day, and the fastidious Conkling took occasion to make a speech upon its merits, ending in the declaration that it would be judicious on the part of the Senate to retain at least some share of the power and patronage conferred by the Tenure of Office act. Doubtless, Conkling and Morton spoke in favor of its total repeal. Sawyer and Howe spoke the other way. The impression is that a total repeal will be carried. The democrats, the anti-imperialists and a majority of the Southern Senators are in favor of its total repeal. Thayer, Sherman and Morton, members of the radical wing, are similarly disposed, so that a clear majority is embraced in the enumeration, and when the vote is about to be taken it will be found that more of the same stripe will be found in favor of repeal.

The Next Census—The Basis of Congressional Representation.

The select committee on the next census held another meeting to-day, and continued their consultation on the two propositions before them, to wit, whether to increase the basis of representation or the number of representatives. The committee is somewhat divided, a portion of the members opposing any further increase in the number of members of the House of Representatives, and another portion being against an enlargement of the basis of representation. The former contend that the House is already too large and unwieldy, and that an addition to its numbers would only tend to embarrass the business. The general impression is that the basis of representation will be enlarged. The committee propose to make a separate bureau to superintend the taking of the census, and to discontinue it entirely from the United States Marshal's office. Should the law be passed in this shape it will dispossess the numerous aspirants for United States marshalships under Grant. The taking the census in connection with the United States Marshals has heretofore given considerable patronage to that office, and as it was expected that the same course would be pursued in the present instance the office has been eagerly sought after.

A Pardon Easily Obtained.

The President to-day issued a pardon to Mr. Dempsey, of the stationery firm of Dempsey & O'Toole, who was sentenced a day or two ago to pay a fine of \$300 and be imprisoned ten days for an assault on a Patent Office clerk. The pardon was procured by R. T. Merrick and John Thayer, who represented the President that the law had already been satisfied by Mr. Dempsey having appeared before a magistrate, confessed the assault, paid his fine, and having been placed under bonds to keep the peace.

Bills Which Have Become Laws Without the President's Signature.

The following bills and joint resolutions having been presented to the President on the 10th instant, and not having been returned by him within the constitutional limit of ten days (Sundays excepted), have become laws:—The bill appropriating \$30,000 for the temporary relief of the poor and destitute people in the District of Columbia. The resolution relative to the recent contract for stationery for the Department of the Interior; it suspends payment to Messrs. Dempsey & O'Toole. The resolution respecting the provisional governments of Virginia, Texas and Mississippi. This provides that persons holding offices in these States who cannot take or subscribe to an oath of office, according to a previous act of Congress, shall, on the passage of this resolution, be removed from office, and the duty of filling the vacant positions shall be left to the duty of the respective commanders to fill the vacancies so created by appointment of persons who can take the oath; provided that the provisions of this resolution shall not apply to persons who, by reason of the removal of their disabilities, as provided in the fourteenth article of amendment to the constitution, shall have qualified for office.

The Cherokee Neutral Lands Monopoly.

The largest patent for lands that has been granted for many years, excepting grants to railroads, was signed by authority of the President to-day. Mr. Cowan, the secretary for signing land patents at the Executive Mansion, signed one in favor of James F. Jay for 113,475 acres of the Cherokee neutral lands.

The Great Steamboat Disaster on the Ohio—The Pilots to Be Punished.

The Secretary of the Treasury has instructed the collector of that department to take necessary steps to secure the enforcement of the twelfth section of the act of 1833 against the pilots of the steamers United States and America, because of the recent collision between those vessels, which resulted in so large loss of life. The section referred to provides that every captain, engineer, or other person employed on board of any steamboat or vessel propelled in whole or in part by steam, whose misconduct, negligence or inattention to his respective duties the life of any person on board said vessel may be destroyed shall be deemed guilty of manslaughter, and upon conviction thereof impose heavy penalties.

Visitors at Army Headquarters.

Nothing of any special interest occurred at the army headquarters to-day. A large number of visitors called on General Grant, including several Senators and Representatives. Among them were Senators Chandler, Rice, Wilson, Kellogg and Senator elect Fenton and many others.

No Distinction of Color at the Inauguration Ball.

A colored man of this city has addressed a note to Mayor Bowen, chairman of the committee on the sale of tickets for the inauguration ball, stating that a number of his friends from Philadelphia and New York would be here on the 4th of March, and asks whether any distinction on account of color is to be made.

made in the sale of tickets. Mayor Bowen this morning addressed him a reply, in which he says:—"Any person of respectable character and standing in this community who applies and pays for a ticket to the inauguration ball, to be held in the north wing of the Treasury Department, will not be denied, at least so far as my action is concerned. The question of color never having arisen before the committee I cannot, of course, decide for them."

Example of Warren and Costello.

The President has sent a brief message to the House endorsing the following:—
TO THE PRESIDENT:—
The Secretary of State, referring to a report to the President of the 20th ult., accompanied by a copy of correspondence relating to the imprisonment in Ireland of Messrs. Warren and Costello, citizens of the United States, has the honor to report further, that he has been informed by Mr. Edward Thornton, her Majesty's Minister here, and by Mr. Severdy, British Minister at London, that those persons have been released. Respectfully submitted.
WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Department of State.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1869.

Another Contested Election Case.

S. L. Hope, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of South Carolina, arrived here last night. He claims a seat in Congress from the third district of that State. Mr. Reed, the democratic candidate, received a majority of the votes cast and has a certificate to that effect. Judge Hope brings a certificate signed by the board of canvassers and by the Governor that he received a majority of the legal votes cast.

Weekly Currency Statement.

Receipts of fractional currency from the printing division of the Treasury Department for the week ending to-day, \$891,000. Shipments—To the Assistant Treasurer at Philadelphia, \$100,000; to the national banks, \$22,880. Treasurer Spinner holds in trust for the national banks, as security for circulation, \$343,567,000; and for public deposits, \$34,217,350. National bank currency issued during the week, \$202,600; total to date, \$512,733,350. Mutilated bills returned, \$1,929,042. Insolvent banks notes redeemed, \$988,387. Actual circulation at this date, \$226,815,077. Redemption of fractional currency for the week, \$637,760.

Postmaster at Augusta, Ga.

The President to-day nominated George W. Summers for Postmaster at Augusta, Ga.

THE FORTIETH CONGRESS.

Third Session.

SENATE.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1869.

CREDENTIALS OF ENGINEER CASSELY.

The President laid before the Senate the credentials of Eugene Cassely, Senator elect from California.

PETITIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Mr. COLE (rep. of Cal.), presented the petition of citizens of California praying for woman suffrage in the District of Columbia.

Mr. SUMNER (rep. of Mass.), called up the joint resolution authorizing the Attorney General to investigate the claims of Nett & Co., for damages for the seizure of the schooner *Net* and *Brooklyn*, and providing for their indemnity. Passed.

Mr. MORGAN (rep. of N. Y.), presented the resolutions of the New York Chamber of Commerce relative to the seizure of the schooner *Net* and *Brooklyn*. Also application of citizens of Virginia, praying for the ratification of the constitution adopted by the convention in Richmond, Va., in 1861, and protesting against the removal of political disabilities in that State.

BILLS REPORTED.

Mr. MORGAN, from the Committee on Commerce, reported, with an amendment, the House bill to repeal the act approved March 2, 1867, regulating the disposition of the houses and other buildings erected under the laws relating to customs, and to amend certain acts for the prevention and punishment of frauds on the revenue.

The amendment restricts the repeal to the second, third and fourth sections of said act.

Mr. MORGAN reported also favorably the House bill to establish the collection district of Ancon, N. C., and to more accurately define the boundaries of the district of Newark, N. J., which was taken up and passed.

MINNESOTA UNIVERSITY LANDS.

Mr. RABEY (rep. of Minn.), introduced a bill authorizing the President to lease lands for the support of a State university.

PRIVATE BILLS PASSED.

On motion of Mr. SUMNER, for the relief of Abbott O. Smith, of Ohio, was passed. It gives him \$5,000 for the use of his invention utilizing the steam engine.

On motion of Mr. WILLIAMS (rep. of Oregon), the bill in relation to certain private land claims in New Mexico was taken up and passed.

AMENDMENT TO THE AGRICULTURE ACT.

Mr. CORBETT (rep. of Oregon), called up the bill authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to issue an American letter of credit to the ship *Andromeda* of Boston, which was put under the protection of the British flag during the rebellion.

Mr. CORBETT said that he was strongly opposed to allowing American shipowners who, from selfish motives, had put their vessels under foreign flags, to bring them again under the protection of the United States.

Mr. CORBETT said that the transfer of the *Agra* was made without the consent of her owners. He called attention to the statement in the memorial of the owners.

Mr. NYS said that if that were so the transfer was illegal, and no legislation was necessary to reinstate the vessel in her former position.

Mr. CAMERON (rep. of Pa.), was in favor of a general bill, applying to all vessels that were entitled to the protection of the United States flag, and until such a bill could be passed he would have the interested parties wait.

Mr. SUMNER said the Senator from Pennsylvania forgot that these gentlemen had already waited a good while. He, too, was in favor of a general bill, and he would, if possible, take up the matter at an early day, and deal with them on their merits. To let this bill wait would be to kill it.

Mr. NYS read the statement of the memorialists to the effect that the ship *Andromeda* was seized by the British, and that she was being used as a privateer. He said that he was in favor of the bill, and that he would support it.

Mr. CORBETT said that the bill was an exceptional case, and that it was not necessary to pass it.

The discussion continued until the expiration of the morning hour, which brought up as unfinished business the bill to repeal the Tenure of Office Act.

Mr. SUMNER said that he made an unsuccessful effort to have it set aside for the purpose of taking up the business of the Committee on Commerce, and that he would try to get it passed at an early day.

On motion of Mr. WILSON (rep. of Mass.), Wednesday's business was set apart for the consideration of the business from the Committee on Military Affairs.

Mr. FREELINGHUYSEN (rep. of N. J.), moved to set aside the bill temporarily, that he might move to assign next Wednesday for the consideration of his Naturalization bill.

Mr. HENDRICKS (dem. of Ind.), opposed the motion, because he regarded the bill as one which, if passed, would make naturalization very expensive business.

The motion of Mr. Freelinghuyssen was lost and the Senate then proceeded to consider the bill to repeal the Tenure of Office Act.

Mr. CONKLING (rep. of N. Y.), said that it was generally believed that any human action could be justified by proving it to be the best alternative, and that the passage of the Tenure of Office Act could be easily and fully justified. It had been enacted to meet an attempt in the interest of slavery and to aggrandize the power of the Executive.

He said that the Executive had passed away, and the Executive office was about to be entrusted to one who had never set himself above the law, but to every one who had evinced sense, moderation, capacity and integrity as entitled him to the confidence of Congress and the people.

The Tenure of Office Act was now needless and inconvenient, and to dispense with no more. Looking merely at the requirements of the next four years, the Tenure of Office Act was now needless and inconvenient, and to dispense with no more.

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would require the Senate to pass upon the propriety or impropriety of the President's action in removing officers during a recess of the Senate. It would be the duty of the Senate, as the Senator from New York had said it would be.

Mr. CONKLING replied that the constitution expressly provided that the President should have the power of appointing and removing officers, and that the Senate should have the power of confirming and rejecting appointments. He said that the President had the power of appointing and removing officers, and that the Senate should have the power of confirming and rejecting appointments.

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crime; but such right to vote should be subject to such regulations, in form, in their application to all elections, as may be prescribed by the President, in the exercise of his power of prescribing the times, places, and manner for holding the elections.

The amendment offered by Mr. LOGAN, (rep. of Ill.), to strike out the words in the Senate amendment, "and to hold office." He contended that it was unnecessary, that the President should have the power of appointing and removing officers, and that the Senate should have the power of confirming and rejecting appointments.